

Special Education Advisory Panel

June 23, 2006

Minutes

Members Present

Deana O'Brien	Martha Crabtree	Barbara Scheidegger
Bev Woodhurst	Theresa Valdes	Joan Zavitsky
Cathy Einhorn	Dorothy Parks	Patti Simcosky
Mike Hanrahan	Melodie Friedebach	Lynda Roberts
Kent Kolaga	Shirley Woods	Jeaneal Alexander
Deb Hendricks	Melissa Frazier	Kris Callen
Nina Murphy	Doreen Frappier	Amanda Coleman

Members Not Present

DeAnn Fiedler	Kim Oligschlaeger	Stephen Viola
Trish Grassa	Mary Kay Savage	Pam Walls
Eileen Huth	Kenneth Southwick	Ray Wicks
Pat Jackson	Meghan Stewart	

DESE Staff

Pam Williams	Margaret Strecker	Stan Johnson
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Copies of handouts distributed at the meeting are available at:

<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/94142meetings.html>.

Call to Order/Introductions/Approval of Minutes – Deana O'Brien called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. There were two changes to the April minutes:

- In the Programs Section, change all references to Kris Callen to Martha Crabtree.
- In the FR #13 section, add *as it affects policy, rules, and regulations* to the end of the sentence: *Deana O'Brien asked Pam Williams for the contact information for John Copenhaver (MPRR) so she can talk with him about the panel's roles in the development of legislation.*

Kent Kolaga made a motion to approve the minutes with the changes indicated. Theresa Valdes seconded the motion. Motion passed.

DESE Update

Confirmation of Commissioner King's Visit to Panel in August (items to discuss) – Pam Williams indicated that the Commissioner is scheduled to meet with the panel at the August 3 meeting. The panel suggested the following topics for him to discuss:

- 4th cycle MSIP and how special education monitoring fits in.
- The Commissioner's global perception on where No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is going and the changes at the federal level and impact on special education.
- Highly qualified teachers.
- The Commissioner's expectations of the involvement of parents and the panel as a whole (how do parents fit in and what is their role).
- The Commissioner's expectations of what the panel can expect from DESE and any potential changes/shuffling with Melodie's retirement.
- Address the continuity statewide on transition (when students reach age 21) – students are aging out and are not prepared. What are some best practices currently being used? What plans are there for districts since career centers and vocational schools are becoming less of an option? Are there any new program initiatives statewide in special education that districts could move toward? Dorothy Parks suggested that if the panel has questions or concerns regarding Vocational Rehabilitation, they can contact her.
- Differentiated diplomas – status update and how will it affect special education students.
- The panel may want to update the Commissioner on what the panel has done this past year. Melodie will share the draft annual report with the Commissioner prior to the August meeting.

Part B Application – Pam Williams indicated that the Part B application is done and has been submitted to OSEP.

Federal Regulations – Pam Williams indicated that DESE is anticipating the federal regulations by the end of August.

Part B Monitoring System Update – Margaret Strecker, Director of the Special Education Compliance Section, indicated that every school district in Missouri receives a review by DESE every five years. This includes the special education monitoring as well as SMIP which accredits school districts. This past year was the end of the third cycle of MSIP. The coming school year begins the fourth cycle of MSIP. Both reviews are trying to refine the process and focus more on issues that relate to the performance of students. A recent stakeholder meeting was held to review and suggest changes for the special education monitoring process. The Division has awarded a contract for the development of a web-based monitoring system that will track monitoring results. Districts will be provided with a yearly profile that will give them data on each of the state performance standards. The Division envisions the new web-based monitoring system assisting districts in the development of improvement plans and the analyzing of district data.

Every year DESE will review data for all districts focusing on post secondary transition and elementary achievement. DESE will offer districts that are having difficulty meeting the state performance targets the opportunity to apply for competitive grants. The RPDC contracts for the coming school year include the development of training for districts on how to use and analyze data. Much of the monitoring process will stay the same. Districts will receive training in the fall for the year they are to be monitored. Districts will conduct self assessments, file reviews, send DESE data through the new data system, and will send DESE supporting documentation for student files. Districts will have to send in some additional data that is currently not required. This will include information regarding First Steps and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and will include their improvement plans.

Each spring/summer, Division staff will complete the desk reviews for the self assessments for districts to be monitored for the following school year. Districts that are the farthest from the state targets will be scheduled for on-site visits. Training will be provided to those districts prior to their on-site visit. Districts will be required to submit a corrective action plan on items found out of compliance. Systemic noncompliance issues will have to be corrected within 12 months. Other individual noncompliance issues will need to be corrected in a much shorter period depending on the issue. Division and RPDC staff will assist districts in correcting the items found out of compliance.

Graduation Requirements and Differentiated Diplomas – Stan Johnson, Assistant Commissioner for the Division of School Improvement, shared information/recommendations from the High School Task Force. The task force discussed the need to raise the standards for high school graduation. The recommendation was to raise minimum graduation requirements from the current 22 to 24 beginning with the graduating class of 2010. Students will be required to earn four units in English and three units each in the areas of math, science, and social studies. This represents an increase of one full unit in each of the four core academic areas. In addition, the new standards require a half-unit course in "personal finance" and a half-unit course in health education. The option of embedding credits in other courses is also an option for districts.

Mr. Johnson indicated that the High School Task Force also recommended other changes: developing a high school exit exam to replace the current MAP assessments; and instituting differentiated diplomas as a way to motivate students and recognize high-achievers. Those proposals will require additional study and recommendations may be made to the State Board of Education later this fall.

Working Lunch – Subcommittee Meetings

Subcommittee Reports

Public Comment – Cathy Einhorn indicated that they had a conference call to discuss the public forums. They are planning to:

- hold the first public forum after the start of the new school year
- keep expenses (advertising, interpreters, etc) under \$200 for each forum

- locate a building that will be nonconfrontational and have sufficient parking/accessibility
- advertise in the local newspaper and send flyers and emails as needed (some bulk mail if needed)
- contact the regional centers, groups, etc.
- have a sign in sheet which will indicate the category for the person attending
- allow those present 3-5 minutes to speak (will ask them to also write their questions/suggestions on note cards)
- establish ground rules for each forum
- have no questions and answers (only collecting information)
- hand out contact information for DESE staff
- have a generic topic of unmet needs in special education (systemic issues) (may at some point identify specific topics for discussion)
- have 3-4 forums per year
- possibly have some recording costs
- MPACT offered their assistance in finding meeting locations and/or facilitators
- evaluate first forum before scheduling another one

It was suggested that the forums have a knowledgeable facilitator to assist in trying to capture each person's issue but there could be a cost factor involved. The subcommittee will then report the systemic issues to the panel at a future meeting. Kent Kolaga made a motion to have a specific topic for the public forums but also indicate that the forum is not limited to just that topic. There also needs to be an on-going report at the next panel meeting providing samples of flyers, what is going to be said at the forums, who will be there, more specific details, etc. Shirley Woods seconded the motion. Motion passed with one member opposing and one abstention.

Evaluation – Lynda Roberts indicated the first draft copy of the annual report was recently emailed to panel members for review. Still need to add any updates from the subcommittees and minutes from this meeting. If you have any suggestions or comments, contact Lina Browner or Lynda by July 7. Lynda plans to have the draft report ready to email to panel members for final review between July 14-21.

Rules and Regulations – Amanda Coleman indicated they are waiting for the federal regulations.

Monitoring – Kent Kolaga handed out information regarding the proposed format for the December Due Process and Child Compliant Data report.

Child Compliant Satisfaction Survey – Kent indicated that they are reviewing the child complaint satisfaction survey preliminary data. The subcommittee recommended DESE look at ways of getting more parent responses.

Programs – With the resignation of Tamara Arthaud from the panel, Martha Crabtree was appointed the new chair of the Programs subcommittee.

Martha Crabtree suggested that the panel invite Michael Muenks to a future meeting to give a follow-up presentation on MAP-A. Martha asked if the Programs subcommittee could be informed of the MAP-A training. Melodie indicated that RPDC regional facilitators will be conducting the MAP-A training in August and will be offering enough trainings throughout the state for every teacher administering the MAP-A. Another concern the subcommittee has evolves around the performance indicators for MAP-A (API-alternate performance indicators and AGLE-alternate grade level expectations).

The subcommittee would like more information on the incentive grants mentioned earlier during the monitoring discussion. How will the money be disseminated and how will DESE assist districts that do not know how to write grants? The subcommittee would like a follow-up report from DESE regarding these decisions.

The subcommittee would also like more clarification on the ACT and what types of accommodations would be given for students with disabilities. They would also like additional information on RtI (Response to Intervention). Melodie indicated the Division has some resource information from NASDSE that we could send to subcommittee members.

Nominations – Barbara Scheidegger indicated each of the nominations for officer positions and members at large for the executive committee were contacted to determine their interest in running for the position(s) they were nominated for.

They also contacted the nominations for the panel vacancies. The nominations subcommittee submitted suggested names to DESE. DESE is in the process of contacting the potential nominees and asking them to complete and return the criminal background check. Barbara suggested that the subcommittee consider sending a letter to every nominee at least annually indicating their application is on file and will be reviewed as vacancies occur.

Formal Recommendations #9 – Waiting for the results from the survey.

Formal Recommendations #12 – Awaiting Governor's signature on a bill to change state law. If Governor signs the bill, those changes will become effective August 28. Kent Kolaga asked if the resolution conference remains a possibility. Pam Williams indicated that if a parent requests a resolution conference, the district has to hold it. Kent wanted to know if the resolution conference could be included in state regulations. Pam indicated she was not sure. It was then suggested an update be given at the August meeting.

Formal Recommendations #13 – Deana O'Brien received a response from John Copenhaver, Director of the Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center and in her opinion; he indicated that it is somewhat discretionary.

Sample of Open Meeting Notice – Two sample open meeting notices were emailed to the panel prior to the meeting. Deana O'Brien indicated that panel members should begin using the samples (insert meeting information as needed and send to Lina for posting). The news media section should contain Lina's contact information.

New Business – Melodie Friedebach handed out letters of appreciation to the members of the panel that have served their full three three-year terms. Melodie also presented Deana O'Brien with a plaque in recognition of her leadership as panel chair this past year.

Election of Officers

Chair – Bev Woodhurst

Vice Chair – Joan Zavitsky

Secretary – Lynda Roberts

Election of Executive Committee Members

Kristen Callen

Mary Kay Savage

Shirley Woods

Ray Wicks

Member Issues/Reports – Bev Woodhurst indicated that a new dental clinic is opening in the St. Louis area. Bev will email the information to Lina to send to the panel.

Pam Williams is working arrangements for an orientation for new panel members in conjunction with the October meeting.

Adjournment – Joan Zavitsky made a motion to adjourn. Deb Hendricks seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.